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P 151014Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY BISHKEK
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 0268
INFO RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING 2297
RUEHDBU/AMEMBASSY DUSHANBE 1666
RUEKJCS/OSD WASHDC
RUMICEA/USCENTCOM INTEL CEN MACDILL AFB FL
RHEFDIA/DIA WASHDC
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RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC
RUEHVEN/USMISSION USOSCE 2701
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2084
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO BRUSSELS BE
RUEHBS/USEU BRUSSELS
RUEHLMC/MILLENNIUM CHALLENGE CORP

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SUBJECT: Embassy Events Marking Ramadan and Orozo Ait

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11. (SBU) On September 25, the Ambassador hosted an Iftar dinner for local religious leaders and members of the diplomatic corps and interfaith community. Over forty guests joined Embassy staff for this event. In her remarks, the Ambassador emphasized the positive spirit of cooperation between the U.S. and Kyrgyzstan and readiness for future achievements. Mufti Murataly aji Jumanov expressed his appreciation for the event, noting that this gesture showed the Ambassador's and the United States' respect for the Muslims of Kyrgyzstan.

12. (SBU) On October 1, the Ambassador hosted an Iftar dinner in the more religiously observant southern city of Jalalabad. Over 25 religious leaders and alumni of the USG-sponsored community connections program for religion in the southern capitals of Jalalabad and Osh joined the Ambassador and Embassy staff at this event. The governor of Jalalabad Oblast was the highest-level Kyrgyz guest. The dinner marked the first time the USG hosted such an event in the city, and guests expressed their gratitude for recognizing the Muslim community in such a respectful and successful way. Noting that the Embassy hosted a southern Iftar dinner last year in the city of Osh, several guests commented that the United States was the only diplomatic mission to reach out so actively to the Muslim faithful in the south.

13. (SBU) On October 12, the Deputy Chief of Mission continued the tradition of a senior member of the Embassy staff addressing those gathering for morning prayers on Orozo Ait in downtown Bishkek. Speaking in Kyrgyz, the DCM told the more than 50,000 Muslim men gathered in the square and adjacent streets surrounding the Parliament building that the United States hoped that the values celebrated during Ramadan would lead to a world of greater freedom, tolerance and peace. The DCM was one of four diplomatic officials who spoke at the event. The others were the Iranian and Pakistani Ambassadors, who spoke in their native languages with interpretation, and the Turkish Embassy Religious Affairs Officer, who also spoke in Kyrgyz. The event was broadcast live on Kyrgyz television.

14. (SBU) The Ambassador also issued a public greeting to all the citizens of Kyrgyzstan on behalf of the United States in honor of

Orozo Ait. The Ambassador's statement was widely placed in print and internet media and was read during newscasts on independent Channel 5 seen in Bishkek and Osh, with a potential audience of 1.5 million viewers.

Yovanovitch